

TVSPORTS MARKETS

FRIDAY 25 JANUARY 2013 · VOLUME 17 · NUMBER 2

ATHLETICS 1

Diamond League's 'perfect world' is gone, yet rights fees increase

By Kevin McCullagh

Organisers of the Diamond League this week hailed the athletics series, which launched in 2010, as a success, but accepted that it was unrealistic to expect the meetings to secure widespread live coverage on the main free-to-air channels in the big European television markets.

"We have established the goals we wanted to achieve," Patrick Magyar, vice chairman of the Diamond League and director of the Weltklasse Zürich athletics meeting, told *TV Sports Markets* this week. "We wanted to have the best meetings in the world with the best fields in the world. I think we have that."

He added, however, that expectations about coverage levels had to reflect the reality of how the television market now works. "We cannot expect to be on the main free-to-air television channels in the big five European markets. Very few properties achieve this. They are usually: football, football, football, football, and maybe Formula One."

Magyar said that the new reality of the

television market was "not a perfect world" for the league. "The perfect world was the mid-1990s when we were on BBC or ITV in the UK and the only reason they would interrupt coverage would be to broadcast a news report."

Despite these limitations, however, there were many positives. "The brand has been very well established and taken up. And TV audiences have developed very positively compared to [the Diamond League's predecessor] the Golden League," he said.

Global media-rights revenues for the Diamond League – a 14-event annual series of the world's best one-day athletics meetings – will have risen by a third between its inaugural season and 2013, following several upcoming deals.

The series is guaranteed \$6 million (€4.5 million) per year, plus a share of revenues earned on media rights sales over this figure under a five-year global media rights deal with the IMG Media

Continued on page 3 ►

AGENCIES

Crunch year for Arnaud Lagardère

By Frank Dunne

The next 12 months will be critical for the future of Lagardère Unlimited, owner of the Sportfive, World Sport Group and IEC in Sports agencies. While few will expect it to turn 2012's losses into profits, it will at least need to send a strong message to the market that the ship has been steadied.

Critically, Arnaud Lagardère, the company's general and managing partner, will have to begin producing concrete

evidence that his vision for the future is a credible one. Many in the industry – from analysts to rival agency bosses to some former executives – have profound doubts about whether it is.

The year has not begun well for the company, with the sudden departure of two of its top executives. Earlier this month, Nick Haigh stepped down as

Continued on page 6 ►

CONTENTS

1,3 The Diamond League is working but organisers are realistic about live coverage on major channels

1,6 It is time for Arnaud's vision for Lagardère Unlimited to convince WSG's \$1bn rights deal won't be touched by us, say Fifa and AFC

2 Fastrack: Copa del Rey deal bucks Spanish crisis; Lack of stars caps Concacaf earnings in Canada

3 Latest ARD/ZDF athletics deal confirms market correction

4 Fox is expanding in Brazil and won't be relying on football

8 Agency defends Cup of Nations fee demands which broadcasters in Nigeria say are 'unsustainable'

8 The IPL is spawning many copy-cat leagues but rights experts say that they can't all work

9 Sports Clips

Follow us on Twitter

@TVSportsMarkets

All stories and
Sports Clips also
available online at
tvsportsmarkets.com

sport
business

FASTRACK

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mediapro closes Copa del Rey rights sales

The Spanish Mediapro agency completed its rights sales for this season's Copa del Rey competition with Mediaset Spain, which owns the Telecinco and Cuatro commercial channels, in a deal agreed this month and thought to be worth just under €2 million (\$2.7 million).

Mediaset fought off competition for the rights from rival commercial broadcaster Antena 3, owned by the Grupo Planeta publishing group. Last year, Telecinco showed six cup matches, paying just over €2 million.

Mediaset will show five matches on Telecinco. It began its coverage of the competition on January 10 with the match between Barcelona and Córdoba. It will also show both legs of one of the quarter-finals and both legs of one of the semi-finals.

The deal is for exclusive rights in Spain, excluding Barcelona matches in the round of 16 and the quarter-finals. Regional broadcaster TV3 in Catalunya agreed a deal late last year with Mediapro covering three seasons, 2012-13 to 2014-15, for four cup matches per season involving Barcelona, two legs in the round of 16 and two at the quarter-final stage.

TV3's deal with Mediapro is worth about €6 million per season, which also includes some production costs. Mediapro had approached the broadcaster with an asking price of €7 million per season. In addition to four Barcelona cup matches, it also has live rights to second division matches involving Catalan teams, and extended highlights rights from La Liga for the two top-tier Catalan teams – Barcelona and Espanyol.

The rights fee was out of proportion with other values for sports content in the recession-hit Spanish market due to the importance of the rights to TV3, one insider said. "TV3's sport offering

could not survive without Barca's rights. It was a huge leverage for Mediapro in the negotiations."

A direct comparison with TV3's deal with Mediapro in the last cycle cannot be made due to the difference in content. Last season, TV3 paid about €20 million per season for a live free-to-air Liga match each week in a primetime Saturday slot, and second division and cup rights. The Liga rights included 15 matches involving either Real Madrid or Barcelona, including one *Clásico* match between the two.

The pay-television rights to the cup are held by pay-television broadcasters Digital Plus and Gol T as part of deals which also include the first and second division rights (*TV Sports Markets* 16:15). The rights to the final are held by state broadcaster TVE in a deal worth €3.5 million per game, which expires at the end of the 2013-14 season. In Spain, the cup final must be shown on free-to-air television due to listed-events legislation. ■

Canada not a big draw in Canada

Rogers Sportsnet's renewal deal for the exclusive rights for Concacaf events this month is understood to be worth about \$500,000 (€373,000) over four years, from 2012-13 to 2015-16.

The Canadian pay-television broadcaster acquired English- and French-language rights to the events. Concacaf is football's governing body in North and Central America and the Caribbean.

Sportsnet faced no competition for the rights from pay-television broadcaster TSN, its main competitor for football rights.

Football is growing in popularity in Canada, as rights fees prove. The 2018-2022 Fifa World Cup deal is worth \$75 million and the next Premier League deal is worth \$7 million per season. But even in its domestic market the national team is not a big draw for broadcasters. Canada is ranked 64 in the world, and

seventh in the Concacaf region behind countries such as Haiti, Panama and Jamaica. The team features no famous players and does not deliver big audiences for broadcasters. In the most recent Gold Cup, in 2011, Canada went out at the group stage.

Canada can no longer qualify for the 2014 Fifa World Cup in Brazil after being knocked out last year in the third round of Concacaf qualifying. The team lost 8-1 against Honduras in their final qualifying match on October 16. Canada has only once appeared at the World Cup finals – in 1986 – where it was knocked out in the first round after registering no points and no goals.

Sportsnet also holds the rights to Canada's friendlies and World Cup qualifiers in a five-year deal with the Canadian Soccer Association which expires in 2016.

For the Concacaf Champions League, Canada is assured of one qualifying place each season through the Canadian Championship tournament, which runs from April to May. The tournament involves the three Major League Soccer Canadian teams – Montreal Impact, Vancouver Whitecaps, Toronto – and second-tier club Edmonton.

The 2012 winner – Toronto – is owned by Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment. Rogers Communications, which owns Sportsnet, holds a 37.5-per-cent stake in Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment.

Rogers Sportsnet's new four-year agreement, includes: the 2013 and 2015 editions of the Gold Cup; the annual Champions League club competition; men's and women's qualifiers for the 2016 Olympic Games; the 2013 and 2015 men's U-20 and U-17 Championships; the 2014 and 2016 women's U-20 and U-17 Championships; the Concacaf Futsal Championship in 2016; and the 2014 women's qualifiers for the 2015 Fifa Women's World Cup. ■

ATHLETICS 1

Diamond League delivering on rights fees and audiences

Continued from page 1 ►

agency, from 2010 to 2014.

IMG is understood to be close to agreeing new deals for 2013 and 2014 with broadcasters for pan-Asia, Italy, France, Germany, and Greece. The agency two weeks ago secured a small fee increase in the UK for 2013 and 2014, renewing a deal with public-service broadcaster the BBC. The broadcaster is paying slightly more than the £250,000 (€301,000/\$403,000) per year it paid in 2010-12.

A big factor in the Diamond League's strong rights fees has been the increase in the number of meetings compared to the Golden League, one athletics rights expert said this week. The Golden League contained only six events, missing out on some of the biggest annual athletics meetings, such as the DN Galan in Stockholm and the London Grand Prix. Broadcasters buying the Diamond League have the security of knowing they are getting all of the best one-day meetings in one deal, without the risk that a rival broadcaster could snatch one of them.

The Diamond League was designed to raise the profile of athletics by creating a recognisable 'top tier' of annual athletics meetings. A problem for the sport had been that it disappeared from public view between spikes of interest around the World Championships and the Olympic Games.

"For us, the important thing with the Diamond League is that you appear all year round," Helmut Digel, a vice president of the International Association of Athletics Federations, said.

The IAAF developed the Diamond League concept along with the meetings themselves. The IAAF and the meetings are the shareholders in Diamond League AG, a company set up to exploit the commercial rights of the series. All media rights revenues flow back to the meetings, as opposed to the IAAF.

The series had other goals, including raising the profile of athletics in new markets. The Golden League's six meetings were all in Europe. The Diamond League includes two US events, and an event each in China and Qatar. Digel said the meeting in Doha, Qatar had attracted up to 20,000 spectators – "a big success in a country where you had no real athletics culture."

The series generates revenue via central sales of international media rights – the meetings retain their domestic territory rights – and series title sponsorship sales.

Secondary channels

The international media rights have been sold for broadcast mainly on secondary free-to-air channels or pay-television channels in Germany, the UK, France, Italy and Spain.

The volume of content, the Friday-evening scheduling of many of the events and the fact that athletics is not the big ratings-driver it was 20 years ago mean that major public-service and commercial broadcasters cannot schedule it on their flagship channels.

Quality of television production has been a challenge for the Diamond League. The league is relying on a different host broadcaster in each territory, each with production teams with different skill levels and styles. Quality was inconsistent in the first season with, for example, directors cutting between camera shots at different times while covering a certain discipline, giving the coverage of a single discipline a very different 'feel' at different meetings (*TV Sports Markets* 14:22).

Magyar said production quality was improving as the league and IMG were putting "a lot of effort" into it, developing the broadcast manual, sending athletics production experts to help local production teams, and giving feedback to broadcasters.

"Overall this is working very well and we are getting much, much closer to having a more uniform broadcast and a much neater broadcast overall," he said.

Other gains

Between 2010 and 2012, the Diamond League enjoyed an increase in stadium attendances at the meetings of about 13 per cent, to a total of 330,000.

The meetings have also been successful in securing regular appearances by top athletes. This was important as one of the big questions for the Diamond League was whether the world's best athletes would buy into the concept and appear regularly, driving public interest.

The league abandoned a plan to centrally contract top athletes to appear at a certain number of events per year after the first season, and reverted to the previous system whereby the individual meetings would have their own contracts with athletes. ■

ATHLETICS 2

ARD and ZDF wind back decade-old inflation

By Kevin McCullagh

The value of World Athletics Series rights in Germany has plummeted by 67 per cent between the 2006-09 and 2010-13 cycles.

The series is a group of International Association of Athletics Federations events sold in one media-rights package. The key property in the series is the biennial athletics World Championships, which accounts for almost the entire value of the media-rights package.

Public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF will pay a combined fee of just under €5 million (\$6.7 million) for the series in the 2010-13 cycle, which included the 2011 and 2013 World Championships. They contributed about \$20 million to the European Broadcasting Union deal for 2006-09, including the 2007 and 2009 World Championships.

The ARD and ZDF contribution to the EBU deal for the 2014-17 series is thought to be at a similar level as their fees for 2010-13. The EBU is paying about \$20 million per year for the rights for 2014-17 in a deal agreed directly with the IAAF.

One industry insider said this week that "on the list of properties for which ARD and ZDF believed they were paying too much, the IAAF deal was very high up."

ARD and ZDF acquired the rights for the 2010-13 cycle in two deals. Two

weeks ago they agreed a deal worth just under €3 million for events in 2013, including the World Championships in Moscow this August. In 2011, they paid €2 million for a deal covering that year's World Championships in Daegu, South Korea. Both deals were agreed with the IEC in Sports agency, selling the rights on behalf of the IAAF.

The fee drop is largely down to a collapse in competition. ARD and ZDF bid hard for the 2006-09 rights at a time when the EBU, which acquires rights on behalf of European public-service broadcasters, was facing increasing competition from pay-television, agencies and commercial broadcasters for its core sports rights.

The EBU-IAAF deal that covered 2007 and 2009 was signed at the end of 1999. It was an eight-year deal in two parts – 2002 to 2005, with an option to renew for 2006 to 2009 – with a total value of \$200 million.

The EBU had three years earlier, in 1996, lost Fifa World Cup rights in a deal that was seen as a sign of the consortium's weakening grip on top sports content. The ISL agency and Kirch Group, the media group controlled by the late German media entrepreneur Leo Kirch, outbid it for the rights for the 2002 and 2006 World Cups.

The EBU was outbid for the 2010-13 rights by IEC. The agency acquired the rights in Europe and Africa and has sold them market by market.

In the 2010-13 World Athletics Series cycle, ARD and ZDF, bidding for rights in Germany alone, faced no competition. The German broadcasters exploited this to drive down the price of a property they believed they had overpaid for in order to support the EBU in a time of need. ARD and ZDF are the EBU's most powerful members, and frequently pay the highest contribution to sports-rights acquisitions.

ARD and ZDF are understood to believe the ratings and the number of days of programming provided by the World Championships do not justify the fee they were paying in 2006-09. Each championships last nine days. ARD and ZDF cover other events in the series mostly via news clips.

The location of the 2013 World Championships led some rights experts

to expect ARD and ZDF to pay much more than €3 million. The 2013 championships are being held in Moscow, Russia, a much better time zone for German television audiences than the 2011 event in Daegu. The previous two World Championships were also split between Asia and Europe – 2007 was in Osaka, Japan, and 2009 in Berlin, Germany. The next two are in Beijing, China, in 2015 and in London, the UK, in 2017.

World Athletics Series rights deals

2006-09

EBU paid about \$100 million
ARD/ZDF contribution \$20 million

2010-13

IEC in Sports paid \$80 million
ARD/ZDF paid \$6.7 million

2014-17

EBU paid \$80 million
ARD/ZDF contribution about \$7 million

Sweetener

The new ARD-ZDF deal includes a broadcast sponsorship revenue share that may generate a small amount of extra income for IEC – one source said it may only be worth a five-figure sum to the agency. ARD and ZDF will sell the rights, and will share the proceeds with IEC.

In 2011, the broadcast sponsorship rights went unsold after ARD and ZDF gave them to IEC as part of the rights deal. One factor in the failure to sell the rights was that the deal was agreed only four months before the event.

The hard bargaining by ARD and ZDF contributed to a tough round of sales for IEC. It was one of many markets where the agency failed to find bidders willing to compete against EBU broadcasters for the rights. EBU members generally were said to be playing hardball after their loss of the rights to the agency.

Rights experts say it will be very tough for the agency to make a profit on the contract despite securing rights-fee increases for the series in several markets, including the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Russia and Poland. ■

TV LATIN AMERICA

Fox moves away from football for second channel

By Dan Horlock

The second sports channel which Fox International Channels plans to launch in Brazil later this year will be based heavily around local sports.

Carlos Martínez, president of Latin America for FIC, News Corporation's syndication arm, told *TV Sports Markets* this week that the channel, which is set to launch between June and August, "will be based around local events, and sports other than football."

He said that Fox was planning to acquire rights to local basketball and motor racing, which are both growing in popularity in the country.

The new channel will be bundled with the existing channel, Fox Sports Brasil, in carriage agreements with pay-television platforms. Fox hopes that adding local sports content will make its channels more attractive to platforms and help it increase distribution. Fox Sports Brasil currently has a penetration of 72 per cent and is available in just under eight million pay-television homes.

The second channel will still carry some international football, including matches not involving Brazilian clubs from the Copa Libertadores, the South American equivalent to the Uefa Champions League, and the Copa Sudamericana. It will also broadcast games from European leagues – such as Italy's Serie A and England's Premier League – that are not shown on the main channel.

The focus on non-football content marks a wider shift in the company's sports content strategy in Latin America. Until now, the strategy has been almost exclusively about acquiring rights to premium international football. Football is by far the region's most popular sport.

The shift fits News Corp's wider global business plans. In Asia, in particular, the company has been adopting a more local content strategy in lucrative markets.

Fox currently has three sports pay-

television channels in Latin America in addition to its Brazilian channel, Fox Sports Brasil. It is also launching channels in Chile and Colombia this year with an emphasis on locally relevant content. The company is also seeking more non-football content for its pan-Latin American feeds.

Sharing content

Fox will probably need to sublicense content from market-leading pay-television operator Globosat, owned by the Globo media group, in order to get key local rights.

Globosat has the rights for most of the strong non-football local sports content in Brazil, including the Novo Basquete Brasil, the domestic basketball league, as well as swimming, gymnastics and volleyball until 2016.

At the end of last year, Fox agreed a six-year rights-swap with Globosat, running from 2013 to 2018. Globosat is giving Fox rights to the Campeonato Série A, the top division of domestic club football, and exclusive rights to two games per round from the Copa do Brasil. Fox is also getting non-exclusive live rights for all 2014 Fifa World Cup matches and rights for the 2016 Olympic Games, pending approval of the deal from the relevant governing bodies, Fifa and the International Olympic Committee.

In return, Fox is giving Globosat exclusive rights for certain games from the Copa Libertadores, and non-exclusive rights for other games from the same competition.

“It made sense for both companies to do the swap, as matches from the Libertadores clash, as do the league and cup games,” Martínez said. “The swap increased the value of both broadcasters’ offerings.”

The Copa Libertadores is vital content in Brazil and has proved a strong bargaining tool for Fox in negotiating its carriage deals. It has allowed the broadcaster to gain a strong foothold in the pay-television market. There are six Brazilian teams involved in this season’s competition, more than from any other competing country, including last year’s winner Corinthians.

Other options

Fox is keen to improve the content on its Brazilian channels via further content-sharing deals or bidding for new properties.

Martínez said the company was open to more rights-sharing alliances, which “allowed everyone to win.” Fox has a joint deal with pay-television rival ESPN for the English Premier League rights from 2013-14 to 2015-16, worth a combined \$16.6 million per season (*TV Sports Markets* 16:9). Fox has exclusive rights to the league in the current cycle and is sublicensing rights to ESPN.

Martínez said Fox would bid for the Uefa Champions League rights in Brazil again in the next cycle. Fox has the rights for the current cycle, from 2012-13 to 2014-15, in Central and Latin America, excluding Brazil, in a joint deal with ESPN worth \$25 million per season.

Fox pushed hard to acquire the rights for this cycle in Brazil – which were carved out of the Central and Latin America rights – but was outbid by the incumbent rights-holder ESPN. The rights fee rose 480 per cent, from \$5 million per season in the previous cycle to \$29 million per season in 2012-13 to 2014-15.

“Fox Sports Brasil has to live within its space”

Carlos Martínez, president of Latin America for Fox International Channels

Globo’s dominance

News Corporation companies are famously aggressive in bidding for sports rights and in many markets are prepared to outbid all rivals, from free-to-air and pay-television. In Brazil, the situation is different due to the strength of the country’s biggest media group Globo.

Martínez played down the likelihood of Fox getting into bidding wars with Globo. He said Fox had to “live within its space,” and would remain a comparatively small business, mainly focused on international football.

Globo holds all the key domestic sports rights, including the top-tier football league, the Campeonato Série A, for which it is paying a Latin American record rights fee of close to R\$1 billion (€370 million/\$500 million) per season, for four years from 2012 to 2015 (*TV Sports Markets* 15:17). Last year, Globo extended the rights to the league until the end of the 2018 season (*TV Sports Markets* 16:19).

The Brazilian pay-television sector is underdeveloped, and a lot of top sport is still shown on free-to-air channels, including the Campeonato Série A. Globo has Brazil’s leading free-to-air channel – Rede Globo. It also operates the largest satellite company (Sky Brasil) and the largest cable operator (Net Serviços). Pay-television penetration is around 30 per cent, significantly below neighbouring Argentina, which is close to 80 per cent. This also means that there is growth potential for pay-television companies such as Fox and ESPN.

The Brazilian free-to-air sector is very lucrative. In 2010, free-to-air television advertising generated \$20.4 billion, over 85 per cent of the overall revenue of the television industry of \$23.6 billion, according to the Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística, the Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics. The strength of the content available on Brazilian free-to-air channels has slowed the growth of pay-television in Brazil.

Channel history

Fox Sports Brasil was launched on February 5. Its core content at launch was the Copa Libertadores and Copa Sudamericana. It had US college sport, and content sublicensed from the Fox-owned US cable channel Fuel TV including skateboarding, snowboarding and BMX. It now also shows the Premier League and has exclusive rights to Italy’s Serie A. The Serie A rights were acquired in Fox’s pan-regional Latin American deal from 2012-13 to 2014-15, which is worth about \$25 million per season.

Fox secured wide distribution for the channel by packaging it with its established entertainment channels, providing platforms with a strong sport and entertainment offering. ■

AGENCIES

Crunch time for Lagardère after annus horribilis

Continued from page 1 ►

chairman of the international board at IEC. This was followed this week by the resignation of Phil Lines, Lagardère Unlimited's head of media activities in Europe and Africa, less than a year into the job.

In between came the news that Sportfive International, the group's main sports-rights trading division, had terminated the contracts of seven of its 81 Geneva-based staff and was in a "consultation process" with three London-based members of staff.

Some remaking and remodelling was inevitable, however, following what must be classed as the *annus horribilis* in the brief life of a company created in 2006 to become the industry's number one.

The biggest disappointment of 2012 was Sportfive's failed bid for the rights to the newly-centralised Uefa European Qualifiers package. Lagardère was

prepared to back Sportfive's bid, which also covered the unsold rights to Euro 2016, to the tune of €1.7 billion (\$2.3 billion). This was comfortably ahead of the next-highest bid, from IMG Media, of €1.3 billion.

Lagardère could hardly be blamed for Uefa's eventual decision to accept a bid by the CAA Eleven agency that came with no upfront guarantee. However, those close to the situation point to two pieces of highly questionable management which affected Sportfive's chances of landing the contract.

First, Lagardère allowed two of his most senior executives – Stéphane Schindler and Olivier Guiguet – to mount a successful rival bid, together with the Creative Artists Agency, just months after leaving Lagardère.

Not only did the pair appear not to be tied into non-compete agreements, each remained – in theory, at least – on the company's payroll. Guiguet was retained to advise on Sportfive's negotiations in Russia for the rights to the Olympic Games of 2014 and 2016. Schindler was on a retainer to act as a consultant across a number of other rights properties, but is not thought to have been asked to do so.

Second, and arguably more damaging

to Sportfive's bid, was the company's decision to sue the French football federation, the Fédération Française de Football, in an unsuccessful €50 million lawsuit over a disputed sponsorship agreement. The deterioration in the relationship between agency and federation was dramatic. As recently as September 2009, the French competition authority had fined the federation and Sportfive for entering into long-term exclusive agreements, with no invitations to tender, for the commercialisation of the rights to the French national football team and the French cup.

Industry observers were astonished that the company would go to war with one of the most influential federations within Uefa at the same time as bidding for a major Uefa contract.

One source close to the qualifiers negotiation told *TV Sports Markets* that by the end of the five-month process, Uefa's order of preference for the rights was: 1) CAA Eleven; 2) taking the rights in-house; and 3) IMG. "There was no option four," he said.

Ironically, at the outset of the process, rival agencies were privately grumbling about the likelihood of Sportfive being a shoo-in for the rights. They pointed to a

No Fifa or AFC scrutiny for WSG's \$1bn Asian football deal

The threat which was briefly posed last year to the World Sport Group's \$1 billion (€746 million) media rights and marketing contract with the Asian Football Confederation has evaporated.

The problems for the agency, in which French conglomerate Lagardère holds a 70-per-cent stake, arose last July, when its contract came under scrutiny as part of the investigations by the AFC and Fifa, world football's governing body, into the activities of Mohamed Bin Hammam, the former AFC president.

In July, the AFC was advised by financial consultants and accountancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers to seek legal counsel on whether there were grounds to renegotiate or cancel WSG's deal. The company, which had been commissioned by the AFC to produce

the audit, raised a number of concerns about the way in which the contract was negotiated and questioned whether it properly reflected market value. It also raised similar concerns about a \$300 million, eight-year deal for AFC rights with Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera.

WSG was said to have been incensed by the report, believing that virtually all of its findings were false. *TV Sports Markets* understands that a report into the same affairs, commissioned by Bin Hammam and carried out by accountancy firm Smith & Williamson, concluded that "there was no merit in [PwC's] arguments" as they applied to the WSG-AFC marketing deal.

The AFC's disciplinary committee passed the PwC file to Fifa and the matter formed part of Fifa's decision to ban Bin

Hammam for life on December 17. Fifa said that the life ban was based on the "final report of Michael J Garcia, chairman of the investigatory chamber of the Fifa ethics committee. That report showed repeated violations of Article 19 (conflict of interest) of the Fifa code of ethics, edition 2012, of Mohamed Bin Hammam during his terms as AFC president and as member of the Fifa executive committee in the years 2008 to 2011, which justified a life-long ban from all football related activity."

Two days earlier, Bin Hammam had resigned from his position as Fifa executive committee member and AFC president, and all other roles in football, promising "never to be active in organised football again." He had been suspended from the AFC since May 2011.

variety of circumstantial evidence: Uefa president Michel Platini was an old friend of Arnaud's father, the late Jean-Luc Lagardère; Platini's son Laurent was a lawyer at Lagardère; Lagardère's Qatari shareholders were highly influential in the world of football politics, and, it was said, 'had Platini's ear.' Not to mention Sportfive having by far the greatest amount of experience in trading the rights to national team matches.

The rivals' concerns appeared to have some basis when Uefa passed over to Sportfive the rights for eight football federations whose contracts with other agencies had expired by 2012 and were left without representation for the World Cup qualifier rights being sold in 2012 and 2013. In retrospect, that deal now looks more like a form of compensation for Sportfive, for the impending loss of its football federation business.

One industry insider said that the speed of Sportfive's fall from Uefa's grace was scarcely credible. "To go from a situation where Platini publicly thanked Jean-Luc Lagardère when he was elected as Uefa president to a situation where Uefa is handing the federation rights business to a rival of Sportfive is some achievement."

Changing direction

The departures of senior staff are as much about Lagardère Unlimited changing direction as cutting overheads. It needs to be read in the same context as the arrival this week of Nathalie Zimmermann to lead the marketing team at Sportfive International and the beefing up of the marketing team at Sportfive France in November, with the recruitment of Guillaume Cossau and Florent Marty as directors of client strategy.

Arnaud Lagardère has made it clear since November 2011 that the group will move away from investing in expensive short term sports-rights contracts. He has targeted an increase in sports marketing, event ownership and athlete representation as the future growth areas for the company.

The company already has a portfolio of events which it manages or promotes, of which the World Sport Group's One Asia golf tour is probably the most high profile.

It is unclear whether Lagardère intends to expand the event business through mergers and acquisitions or through the creation of challenger events. It is understood to have already passed on one opportunity – that of acquiring Canal Plus Events, the events and rights-trading

division of the French broadcaster (*TV Sports Markets* 16:22).

One industry executive said that investing in events "means having something which becomes an asset; you are not continually chasing three-year deals which you have to spend heavily on and then compete for again in another three years' time. It is understood that it might take five to six years to make an event successful, but if you get it right it will pay back over a long period."

The company has over 500 athletes on its books, including tennis players such as Caroline Wozniacki and some top NBA basketball and NFL American football players. It is thought that the expansion of the athlete representation business will be largely targeted on the US, where it is a lucrative activity.

In Europe, the opportunities are far more limited. As one expert put it, "the money is nearly all in football. You can do your wristwatch or shaving foam deals but there are really only four or five people that advertisers are interested in. Once you get past the likes of [José] Mourinho, [Cristiano] Ronaldo, and [Lionel] Messi, there is not a lot of money being spent." ■

There had been speculation in the Asian media that both Fifa and the AFC would continue with their probe into the contract and would act upon its recommendations. However, this week the AFC's general secretary, Alex Soosay, told *TV Sports Markets* that the AFC's executive committee had decided that "no further action is required on the PwC report." Fifa said: "This matter is now closed."

The lack of intervention is good news for WSG and Lagardère. The deal is the second most valuable on the books of Lagardère's troubled sports division, Lagardère Unlimited, after WSG's \$1.01 billion, 10-year-deal for the global rights to cricket's Indian Premier League. That deal is currently tied up in a legal battle between WSG and the Board of Control for Cricket in India and the freezing of revenues during the legal hiatus was a big factor in the losses recorded by

Lagardère Unlimited last year.

The only potential cloud on the agency's horizon now is the April election of a new AFC president. According to some local sources, at least four federations are preparing to convince the new AFC president to address the recommendations of the PwC audit. However, one insider said that it was highly unlikely that there would be support for calls to scrap such a lucrative contract and that support for WSG within the confederation was very strong. The agency has been the AFC's exclusive marketing and media rights partner since 1993.

The deal between the AFC and WSG, signed in 2009, runs from 2013 to 2020, and was a renewal of a previous eight-year deal. WSG is paying AFC a guaranteed minimum of \$600 million, or just under \$75 million per season, for the commercial rights to all of its

competitions, with a revenue share above that. The total value of the deal is said to be about \$1 billion. WSG's previous eight-year agreement, from 2005 to 2012, was worth about \$210 million.

The deal covers the rights for the annual AFC Champions League, the Asian Cup in 2015 and 2019, Asian qualifying rounds for the 2014 and 2018 World Cups and Asian final qualifying competitions for the Olympic Games in 2016 and 2020.

The PwC audit first came to light in July last year when the Associated Press news agency and a journalist, James M Dorsey, published extracts. Following a complaint by WSG, the courts in Singapore, where the agency is based, demanded that Dorsey reveal his sources within the AFC. Dorsey is appealing the ruling.

WSG was founded by current chairman Seamus O'Brien in 1992. ■

AFRICA CUP OF NATIONS

LC2: We're not overcharging for Nigeria rights

By Kevin McCullagh

The LC2 Médias-Afnex agency this week rejected accusations by Nigerian broadcasters that the rights fee it demanded for the 2013 Africa Cup of Nations was impossible to refinance.

Millions of Nigerians are currently unable to watch the football tournament, which started on January 19, after talks between LC2 and broadcasters for a free-to-air rights deal failed.

The agency wanted €4.5 million (\$6 million) for a package of rights including the Cup of Nations and eight other Confederation of African Football tournaments in 2013 and 2014. This was down from an earlier asking price of €6 million. The final offer from the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria, an umbrella group representing the country's free-to-air broadcasters, was \$3.5 million, up from an initial offer of \$1.2 million. The broadcasters say the Cup of Nations is the only CAF tournament with any rights value. CAF is the governing body of football in Africa.

"In terms of proportion to her market size and population, Nigeria does not contribute more than any other African country," LC2 said. "If managed professionally, the advertising commercialisation of the many competitions over such a period would easily cover Nigeria's contribution without cost or burden to the general public." Governments in some African countries have helped broadcasters pay for Cup of Nations rights – the Ghanaian government did so for the 2012 tournament.

The Nigerian broadcasters argue that a shrinking local advertising market and the taking up of lucrative advertising categories by central tournament sponsors mean they are guaranteed to lose money if they meet the asking price. "The Nigerian economy cannot sustain this," Raymond Dokpesi, chairman of

Daar Group, a free-to-air broadcaster and member of the BON, said.

The buyer of the 2012 Cup of Nations free-to-air rights in Nigeria, advertising agency Magenta Communications, made a massive loss on them, according to Dokpesi. It tried to make money on the deal by buying airtime on free-to-air channels for the tournament and selling advertising around it. Magenta paid about \$1.5 million and earned less than \$500,000, Dokpesi claimed.

LC2 sells CAF tournament rights in sub-Saharan Africa, excluding South Africa, under a sublicensing deal with the Sportfive agency. The deal runs for the duration of Sportfive's global media and marketing rights deal with CAF, from 2009 to 2016. ■

CRICKET

IPL model won't work for smaller boards, experts say

By Dan Horlock

Cricket boards around the world are hoping to emulate the huge success enjoyed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India with the Indian Premier League by launching their own Twenty20 tournaments. There are many good reasons why it won't work, according to cricket rights experts.

This year, the Caribbean Twenty20 is set to be rebranded and modelled on the IPL franchise-based system as opposed to the inter-island format that has existed since the T20 competition began in 2010. A further addition to the international calendar is the Pakistan Super League, which is set to begin on March 26. A US T20 league is also scheduled to host its first season this year, in June or July. These competitions follow the launch last year of T20 leagues in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The IPL template, however, is only suitable for a league which has a large domestic market and is not dependent on external factors like international media rights and sponsor income, and attracting international marquee players, according

to several rights experts.

As one senior agency executive put it, "I have doubts about these smaller T20 leagues being commercially sustainable. The domestic markets are small and generate very little commercial revenue, the international markets aren't interested, and the international calendar is so full that attracting quality players is hard," he said. The leagues in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh are thought to have struggled to secure rights fees. Their main pan-Asian deals, with pay-television broadcaster ESPN Star Sports, are based on a share of advertising revenue.

Even the IPL does not achieve big revenues for its international media rights. The IPL generates about Rs50 billion (€687 million/\$917 million) in its nine-year media rights deal, from 2009 to 2017, for the Indian subcontinent in media company Sony's deal with the World Sport Group agency. The league's rights outside the Indian subcontinent are worth less than 10 per cent of this.

With limited commercial revenues, the leagues will probably have to depend on the patronage of wealthy individuals. Verus International, a merchant bank set up by businessman Ajmal Khan, will bankroll the Caribbean Premier League. Media-rights income is likely to be small, gate receipts tiny, and sponsorship revenues a maximum of \$4 million (€3 million) to \$5 million per year. Khan agreed a 20-year licensing agreement with the West Indies Cricket Board. He said that he would invest "whatever it takes" to make the league sustainable.

The new tournament in Pakistan is looking for a media rights deal and a title sponsor. It has issued a five-year tender for the media rights, from 2013 to 2017, with a deadline of February 10. It has set a reserve price of \$2 million per franchise and promised that players will earn between \$25,000 and \$100,000 for taking part in the two-week tournament. The Pakistan board has earmarked costs of \$100 million over the five-year period. Experts said that if the figure was accurate the league would probably lose money.

The Federation of International Cricketers' Associations, the players' union, this week advised players to avoid playing in Pakistan for security reasons. ■

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from January 10 to January 23

TV RIGHTS 1

Football: Africa Cup of Nations, Copa Libertadores, Concacaf and more

- **Football:** US pay-television sports broadcaster ESPN acquired rights for the 2013 Africa Cup of Nations. The ESPN3.com website will show live coverage of every game, and Spanish-language channel ESPN Deportes will provide delayed coverage of the semi-finals on February 6 and the final on February 10. ESPN's other platforms will show highlights.
- **Football:** Canadian pay-television broadcaster Sportsnet acquired exclusive domestic rights for seven tournaments operated by Concacaf, football's governing body in North and Central America and the Caribbean (page 2).
- **Football:** The KJ Sports n Media agency acquired the rights for the English Premier League in Chinese Taipei and the Philippines in 2013-14 to 2015-16. The rights cover all 380 league matches per season. Pay-television sports broadcaster WSTV will show the games in the two countries.
- **Football:** Spanish commercial broadcaster Mediaset acquired live rights for five of the remaining matches in Spain's 2012-13 Copa del Rey from the Mediapro agency (page 2).
- **Football:** Spanish pay-television broadcaster Gol TV and UK pay-television broadcaster ESPN acquired exclusive rights in their territories for the 2013 Copa Libertadores, the South American continental club tournament. The deals were agreed by the Traffic Sports agency.
- **Football:** German sports broadcaster Sportdigital acquired rights for the Copa Libertadores, the Copa do Brasil, North and Central American national team qualifying matches for the 2014 Fifa World Cup. The deals, agreed with the Traffic Sports agency, started immediately and will run until 2014. The Copa Libertadores rights include weekly highlights, a preview programme and live coverage. Sportdigital will show at least 10 World Cup qualifying games, excluding US home matches, and at least 10 Copa do Brasil games.
- **Football:** French commercial broadcaster TF1 acquired non-exclusive rights for the final of the Uefa Champions League in a sublicensing deal with French pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus. The deal will run for three seasons, 2012-13 to 2014-15. TF1 will pay Canal Plus €2.5m (\$3.4m) per season.
- **Football:** Chilean state broadcaster TVN acquired highlights rights for the domestic Primera División and Primera División B in a three-year deal, from 2013 to 2015. TVN struck the deal with the Asociación Nacional de Fútbol Profesional, the national governing body and the league's rights-holder.
- **Football:** Peruvian clubs Universitario de Deportes and Sporting Cristal struck domestic rights deals with pay-television broadcaster Gol TV. Sporting Cristal's deal is worth \$2.5m (€1.9m) per year and will run for eight years, 2013 to 2020. Universitario's deal, running until at least the end of 2013, is worth \$3.6m per year. Media Networks Latin America, a division of telecommunications company Telefónica, acquired domestic rights for the Alianza Lima club for \$4m per year. The length of the Alianza agreement was not disclosed.
- **Football:** The Fiji Football Association agreed a deal with FBC TV for the national commercial broadcaster to show a weekly magazine programme produced by the governing body. FBC TV will show the Fiji Foot programme every Friday for three years, from 2013 to 2015.

SINCE LAST TIME

- Media group News Corporation increased its stake in Sky Deutschland from 49.9 per cent to 54.5 per cent. The deal will generate €438m (\$587m) for Sky, with €347.4m to come from News Corp for the shares it is buying, and another €90.6m coming from a second share sale by Sky which News Corp will underwrite.
News Corp also agreed to guarantee half of Sky's rights fee for its German Bundesliga football rights deal. The deal covers exclusive domestic live rights, and will cost Sky €486m per year over the four years from 2013-14 to 2016-17.
- The Spanish government is preparing to introduce a law that would ensure domestic top-tier Liga football clubs adopt a collective approach to selling broadcast rights. The policy to shift from club-by-club rights sales is being drafted by the government's sports council.
- Sky Österreich lost a legal challenge against a European Union directive requiring it to give Austrian public-service broadcaster ORF free access to news clips of football matches to which the pay-television operator holds exclusive rights. The European Court of Justice upheld the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, which says broadcasters with exclusive rights for sports events of 'high interest to the public' must give other broadcasters access to the signal so they can select extracts of up to 90 seconds for news bulletins. The rights-holding broadcaster can only charge to cover any cost incurred in providing access to the signal. It had not cost Sky anything to give ORF access to the football clips.
- RS asked the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, Thailand's media regulator, to relax legislation forcing the pay-television operator to allow free-to-air broadcasters to simulcast coverage of the 2014 Fifa World Cup in its entirety. RS, which acquired exclusive rights for the tournament before the legislation was introduced last year, offered to allow 22 games to be shown on free-to-air television, rather than the full 64-match schedule.

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from January 10 to January 23**TV RIGHTS 2****X Games, IAAF athletics, Major League Baseball, boxing and more**

■ **Action sports:** International sports broadcaster ESPN, which operates the X Games, struck the following rights deals for the 2013 series with broadcasters in countries hosting X Games events: pay-television broadcaster Canal Plus in France, commercial broadcaster Rede TV in Brazil, digital-terrestrial sports channel Marca TV and regional public-service broadcaster TV3 in Spain, and free-to-air and pay-television broadcaster ProSiebenSat.1 in Germany. The deals include live, delayed and highlights rights.

ESPN also agreed deals with: global video news agency SNTV; public-service broadcasters DR in Denmark, NRK in Norway, SVT in Sweden and NHK in Japan; pay-television broadcasters Sky Italia in Italy, ESPN Star Sports in India, Fox Sports in South East Asia and the Extreme Sports Channel for pan-Europe; pay-television broadcaster TSN and French-language pay-television channel RDS in Canada; Hong Kong free-to-air broadcaster TVB; and, in China, the Shanghai Media Group, regional broadcaster Guangdong TV, the Power Sports free-to-air channel, and the ESPN Star Sports channel in hotels.

■ **Athletics:** German public-service broadcasters ARD and ZDF acquired rights for the 2013 International Association of Athletics Federations World Championships. SportA, the broadcasters' sports rights arm, struck the deal with the IEC in Sports agency (page 3).

■ **Athletics:** UK public-service broadcaster the BBC extended its rights for the Diamond League to cover 2013 and 2014 in a deal with the IMG Media agency. The BBC exercised an option in its previous deal, for 2010-12, to extend the rights (page 1).

■ **Badminton:** Badminton Europe appointed the Total Sports Asia agency to distribute global rights for its events for the four years from 2013 to 2016. The agency will sell rights to the European Championships, European Mixed Team Championships, European Men's and Women's Team Championships and the European Club Championships.

■ **Baseball:** US sports broadcaster ESPN acquired exclusive Spanish-language rights for the 2013 and 2017 editions of the World Baseball Classic national

team tournament. ESPN's agreement with the competition's organiser, World Baseball Classic, includes multi-platform live coverage of all games plus highlights. The deal also includes exclusive Spanish-language rights for qualifying games for the 2017 edition.

■ **Baseball:** US pay-television broadcaster Time Warner Cable acquired regional rights for Los Angeles Dodgers Major League Baseball games. The *Los Angeles Times* said the broadcaster would pay \$7bn (€5bn) over 20 years, from 2014 to 2033, or \$350m per year. TWC is expected to exploit the rights on a new channel, to be launched and owned by the Dodgers. The Dodgers will allow TWC to operate the channel, produce its content and distribute its programming.

■ **Boxing:** US pay-television broadcaster WealthTV acquired rights for the Prizefighter 'Welterweights III' event on January 19. The broadcaster agreed the one-event deal with UK promoter Matchroom Sport, which operates the Prizefighter series.

FOOTBALL

- Manchester United acquired UK pay-television broadcaster BSkyB's 33.3-per-cent stake in MUTV to become the 100-per-cent owner of the English Premier League football club's pay-television channel.
- A Spanish court lifted an embargo on Deportivo La Coruña collecting €9m (\$12m) owed to the Spanish Liga club for media rights by the Mediapro agency. The club had been barred from receiving the money after the country's tax authority, AEAT, attempted to confiscate all of Deportivo's income when the club filed for bankruptcy protection earlier this month.
- Sergei Ivanov, the head of Vladimir Putin's presidential administration in Russia, said that the country's underdeveloped sports-rights market was one of the main reasons for the low level of commercial development in Russian domestic football. Twelve of the 16 Russian Premier League clubs rely on government funding. Ivanov said Russian sport was failing to generate the level of income from media rights fees expected in the rest of the "civilised world."

TV INTERNATIONAL

- Sky Deutschland agreed a deal with Perform to allow the digital media company's ePlayer video-on-demand service to show content from the pay-television broadcaster's sports channels in Germany and Austria. Sky's branded sports channels will be available on ePlayer, with highlights clips and sports news clips available on the service until this summer. The Perform-owned Mediasports agency will sell advertising around Sky content on the ePlayer.
- The chief executive of German media group Constantin Medien, Bernhard Burgener, vowed to get the company's basic-tier sports channel Sport1 "back on track", after a recent decline in audience share. The broadcaster is studying potential new programme formats, and Constantin is open to inviting a partner to invest in the channel, Burgener said.
- US network CBS sold out its advertising inventory for its live coverage of the 2013 NFL American football Super Bowl game, with some 30-second spots selling for more than \$4m (€3m).
- Media conglomerate News Corporation is considering revamping its Fox Soccer US pay-television channel into a general

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from January 10 to January 23

TV RIGHTS 3

Golf, horse racing, motor racing, swimming, tennis, volleyball and more

■ **Golf:** Indian sports and entertainment pay-television channel Sony Six acquired live domestic rights for the inaugural Golf Premier League, which will take place from February 8-10 in Pune, India.

■ **Hockey:** Asia-focused sports broadcaster One World Sports acquired exclusive North American rights for the inaugural season of the Hockey India League. One World Sports will show live coverage of all 34 games, including the final on February 10, as well as full repeats of the matches. The broadcaster agreed the deal with league organiser Hockey India.

■ **Horse Racing:** The Australian Seven network acquired domestic rights for the Melbourne Cup, Sydney Easter Racing and Spring carnivals. In a deal with the Victoria Racing Club, Seven extended rights for live coverage of the Melbourne Cup carnival for five years, from 2014-15 until 2018-19. Seven acquired free-to-air rights for the Sydney Racing carnival and Spring carnival from Australian pay-television channel TVN.

The length of the deal with TVN was not disclosed.

■ **Mixed Martial Arts:** Online video service DramaFever acquired rights for the Legend Fighting Championship. DramaFever, which is available in the Americas, will be able to show full repeats of all events that have been originally broadcast on pay-per-view television in the US. The repeats will be available for free, with viewers able to access the whole event, individual bouts or highlights. The duration of the deal was not disclosed.

■ **Motor Racing:** The Australian Seven network extended its domestic rights for the V8 Supercars series for two years, 2013 and 2014. The rights cover the main championship series plus the annual Bathurst 1000 touring car race.

■ **Swimming:** US pay-television broadcaster Universal Sports, part of US media group NBCUniversal, extended rights for events operated by USA Swimming, the sport's US governing body. The new agreement will run for

three-and-a-half years, starting immediately and running until 2016.

■ **Tennis:** Polish public-service broadcaster TVP acquired rights for the Women's Tennis Association Tour in a deal with the Perform Group, brokered by the IEC in Sports agency. The deal begins with the 2013 season.

■ **US College Sport:** The IMG agency's college sports division, IMG College, agreed a multimedia rights deal with the University of Mississippi.

■ **Volleyball:** The Infront Sports & Media agency extended its global rights distribution deal with the Confédération Européenne de Volleyball, volleyball's European governing body, for nine years, from 2013 until 2021. Infront will continue to distribute rights for the biennial men's and women's European Championships. From 2014, Infront will also sell rights for the Beach Volleyball European Championships. The deal also covers the 2016 and 2020 Beach Volleyball Continental Cup finals.

entertainment channel later this year, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Fox Soccer's programming could be shifted to News Corp's new national sports channel, which is expected to be called Fox Sports 1 and to launch later this year.

■ Canadian media company Fight Media was granted approval by the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission to launch a television channel dedicated to fantasy sports. The new channel, called The League, will feature call-in shows and discussion programmes to enable fans to gain advice on picks and drafts for their fantasy teams. The channel is expected to launch in the middle of this year.

■ Argentinian telecommunications company Telecentro struck a carriage deal with ESPN for the international sports broadcaster's 3D channel. The ESPN 3D channel was added to Telecentro's HD package.

■ Pay-television action sports channel Fuel TV agreed a carriage deal with pay-television operator OSN, which operates in the Middle East and North Africa. Fuel TV, which is owned by media group News Corporation, is now available in standard definition on OSN ahead of the launch of the high-definition channel on the platform in February.

■ The IMG Media agency struck carriage deals for its rolling sports channel, Sport 24, to be shown on cruise ships operated by the Cunard and P&O lines. The channel, created specifically

for the cruise ship and airline industry, will be shown in public bars and lounges on all three Cunard cruise liners and all seven P&O cruise liners.

TV RIGHTS NEGOTIATIONS

■ The chairman of English football's Premier League, Sir David Richards, will act as a consultant to the Football Association of Thailand during the national governing body's sales process for the next cycle of domestic rights to the Thai Premier League, the country's top football league. The rights for three seasons, from 2013-14 to 2015-16, are expected to be sold in March.

■ Bulgarian state broadcaster BNT and commercial broadcaster TV7 are reported to be interested in acquiring the rights for the domestic Group A Football Championship, which are currently being sold by the Football Media Pro agency. The rights were held by telecommunications company Bulsatcom in a deal that finished at the end of 2012.

■ Russian state broadcaster VGTRK failed to renew its rights for the North American NHL ice hockey league this season, according to the R-Sport news website. VGTRK's Russia 2 channel broadcast NHL games last season.

■ The IMG Media agency set Vietnamese broadcasters reserve prices totalling \$37.5m (€28m) for three packages of live rights for English

SPORTS CLIPS: News from TVSM Daily from January 10 to January 23

football's Premier League in the 2013-14 to 2015-16 seasons. The most valuable package, covering matches played on Sundays, has a reserve price of \$18m. A package covering early afternoon kick-offs on Saturdays is set at \$15m. The third package, covering remaining matches, is valued at \$4.5m. Vietnam's ministry of information and communication agreed with VTV that the state broadcaster should be the only company allowed to enter negotiations with IMG, on behalf of the country's pay-television broadcasters, in an attempt to avoid a bidding war and escalating sports-rights fees.

- Pay-television sports broadcaster SuperSport, which operates in sub-Saharan Africa, is set to strike a rights deal for Botswanan football's Premier League, according to the Mmegi Online website.
- German public-service broadcaster ZDF appointed production company Wige Media to produce coverage of the 2013 Fédération Internationale de Ski alpine ski World Cup event at Garmisch-Partenkirchen on February 23 to March 2.
- A new online channel dedicated to equestrian sports will launch in the Republic of Ireland on February 5. Irish Horse TV will offer coverage of flat and jump racing, showjumping, eventing, dressage and other equestrian disciplines. The channel will be operated by online streaming company Kildare TV, which has previously established internet channels for Gaelic sports clubs.
- The Atlantic Coast Conference group of US colleges hired the Wasserman Media Group agency to explore the possibility of launching its own television channel. The launch of any new channel would involve US pay-television broadcaster ESPN, the competition's rights-holder for the next 15 years, until 2026-27.
- US regional pay-television broadcaster NESN will produce the television coverage of the 2013 American Hockey League All-Star ice hockey event on January 27-28, under a deal with the league.
- Televisa will focus on boosting its sports-rights portfolio in 2013, according to Emilio Azcarraga, the chief executive of the Mexican media group. Azcarraga said that increasing football coverage would be a priority.

ALSO SINCE LAST TIME

- UK telecommunications company BT is hoping to persuade coaches in the English Premiership, the top division of rugby union in the country, to share their match strategies and allow their training sessions to be filmed to make broadcasts of the competition more exciting. BT, which has a four-year domestic rights deal for the Premiership, from 2013-14 to 2016-17, also hopes to convince clubs to allow players to be interviewed as they come off the field at half-time or go into the sin-bin.
- BT signed up the Pitch public relations agency to promote the UK telecommunications company's new sports channels, which will launch this summer, in a deal worth up to £3m (€3.6m/\$4.8m).
- Ten websites illegally showing live coverage of Italian football's Serie A were shut down after Italian broadcaster Mediaset, a Serie A rights-holder, had a complaint upheld by Milan's deputy public prosecutor, Tiziana Siciliano.
- German International Olympic Committee executive board member Thomas Bach rejected criticism from Norbert Lammert, the president of the German parliament, that the country's state broadcasters, ARD and ZDF, spend too much money on sports rights. Bach said that politicians had helped to create competition between broadcasters and therefore could "not now complain about the competition."

INDUSTRY MOVES

- Phil Lines, Lagardère Unlimited's head of media activities in Europe and Africa, quit the sports marketing company, which owns the IEC in Sports, Sportfive and World Sport Group agencies, after less than one year in the role. ■ The Team Marketing agency appointed Tom Houseman to the role of managing director of legal and business affairs. The former head of legal affairs at football's global governing body Fifa will start his new role in March after leaving his current position as managing director of the Ufa Sports agency's Asia division. ■ The MP & Silva agency opened a new office in Paris, France. The office will be led by Pierrick Ysern, who will serve as the agency's country director in France.

EDITORIAL

Editor Frank Dunne
@frankdunneTVSM

Digital News Editor Kevin McCullagh
@kevinmccullagh

Reporter Dan Horlock
@DanHorlock

Telephone +44 (0) 20 7954 3506
Fax +44 (0) 20 7954 3511
Email tvsm@tvsportsmarkets.com

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Designer Stewart Henson
Production Assistant Ciaranne Whitworth
Email carianne@tvsportsmarkets.com

SALES & COMMERCIAL

Telephone +44 (0) 20 7954 3483
Fax +44 (0) 20 7954 3511
Email sales@tvsportsmarkets.com
Paul Santos Head of Sales & Commercial
Email paul.santos@tvsportsmarkets.com

TV Sports Markets

Registered Office 33-41 Dallington Street, EC1V 0BB
© TV Sports Markets Ltd.
Printed by Printflow, Citybridge House,
235-245 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7JD



**sport
business**

Important Terms and Conditions

All rights in this newsletter are reserved. No part of this newsletter may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of TV Sports Markets.

For more information, contact Paul Santos by email on paul.santos@tvsportsmarkets.com